[Translation]

Welfare of Minorities

3213. SHRI ILIYAS AZMI : Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government provide assistance/ funds for the welfare of minorities in Assam;

(b) if so, the funds provided during each of the last three years; and

(c) the annual expenditure incurred by the Government of Assam under this head from its budget?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA) : (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation provides assistance to the backward sections among minorities for setting up of self-employment ventures at concessional rates of interest. The Corporation implements its scheme through the State Channelising Agencies. The State Channelising Agencies of Corporation in Assam was nominated by Government of Assam during the year 1995-96. National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation (NMDFC) had sanctioned an amount of Rs. 75.28 lakhs for the minorities in Assam during the year 1995-96 and 1996-97. Year-wise break-up is as follows:—

Year	Amount (Lakhs)
1994-95	Nil
1995-96	66.10
1996-97	9.18

Under the scheme of pre-examination coaching for weaker sections based on economic criteria Government provides grant to voluntary organisations all over the country including State of Assam for the target group consisting of minorities and other backward classes whose annual income is not more than Rs. 24,000 per year. Funds given to voluntary organisations in Assam for the last three years are as under:—

Year	Amount (Lakhs)
1994-95	3.35
1995-96	Nil
1996-97	Nil

(c) Under the schemes of National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation, the State Channelising agencies of Assam could not avail the funds because it could not complete pre-disbursement codal formalities such as furnishing of Government guarantee, Under Pre-examination coaching scheme Government provides grants to voluntary organisations and not to State Government. The amount disbursed to the voluntary organisation in Assam has been utilised.

[English]

Bomb Blasts on Railway Stations

3214. SHRI JANG BAHADUR SINGH PATEL :
SHRI NAMDEO DIWATHE :

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of bomb blasts on Railway Stations have increased recently in alarming proportion;

(b) if so, the details thereof indicating the loss of property and human lives during the last three years; and

(c) the details of steps taken or proposed to be taken to curb the occurrences of such incidents on Railway Stations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MOHD. MAQBOOL DAR) : (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[Translation]

Pisciculture Centre

3215. SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of pisciculture centres approved in the country during the last three years till date, State-wise;

(b) the total expenditure incurred thereon;

(c) whether the Union Government are contemplating on the proposals pertaining to opening of new pisciculture centres in the country;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(e) the latest position of these proposals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI) : (a) and (b) The Government have not approved any pisciculture centre in the country during the last three years. However, for the promotion of Fresh and Brackishwater Aquaculture, 13 Fish Farmers' Development Agencies (FFDAs) and 2 Brackishwater Fish Farmers' Development Agencies (BFDAs) have been sanctioned during the last three years. State-wise information regarding FFDAs/BFDAs and the total amount released thereon is furnished in the Statement attached.

(c) to (e) As and when proposals in this regard are received, these will be examined.